

*The Paraphrase of Erasmus of Rotterdam vpon the Seconde Epistle of Iohn.*

The text.

The elder to the electe lady and her children, whom I loue in the trueth: and not I onely, but also all that haue knowen the trueth, for the truthe sake whiche dwelleth in vs and shall be in vs for euer. With vs shall be grace, mercie, and peace from god the father, and from the Lorde Iesus Christ the sonne of the father, in trueth & loue. I reioysed greatly, that I founde of thy children walkynge in trueth, as we haue receaued a commaundement of the father. And now beseche I thee lady, not as thoughe I wrote a newe commaundement vnto the, but that same which we haue had from the beginninge, that we should loue one another. And this is the loue, that we should walke after his commaundement. This cōmaundement is (that as ye haue heard from the begynning) ye should walke init. For many deceauers are entred into the world, which confesse nor that Iesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceauer and an Antichrist. Loke on your selues y<sup>e</sup> we lose not that we haue wrought, but that we may haue a ful reward. Whosoeuer transgresseth & bydeth not in the doctrine of Christ, hathe not God. He that en|dureth in the doctrine of Christ, hath both the father & the sonne. If there come any vnto you, & bring not this learning, him receaue not to house: nether bid him god spede. For he that byd|deth him god spede, is partaker of his euil dedes. Behold, I haue tolde you before, y<sup>e</sup> ye should not be ashamed in the day of the Lord. I had many thinges to write vnto you, neuerthelesse I would not wryte with paper & ynke: but I trust to come vnto you, and speake with you mouth to mouth, that oure ioye maye be full. The sonnes of thy electe syster grete the. Amen.

**I** Iohn being an elder wryte vnto the electe lady, and to her sonnes also, whome I loue syncerely, nether doe I thus alone, but al that are with me which haue knowē the trueth of the Gospelle: nether doe they loue them for any other cause, but that they vnderstande the syn|ceritie of the Gospelles profession, which we folowe, to remayne in vs, and shall remayne in vs for euermore. Grace, mercie, and peace be alwayes encreased from God the father, and from the Lorde Iesu Christe, vnto you that perseuer still in the trueth of the Gospelles doctrine, and in mutuall loue one to an|other. I was wonderfully glad, whan I perceaued that thy sonnes folow|ing theyr mothers godlynes, contynued still in the trueth of the Gospelles doctrine, and not gaue herkenynge vnto false doctours, that goe about to turne many awaye from it: where the father gaue vs thys in cōmaunde|ment, that we shoulde geue eare to the doctrine of hys sonne, and that we shoulde not goe out of his fotesteppes. Therfore it is no nede nowe, ladye, for me to instructe thy godlynes with new commaundementes: only let vs continue still in that, whiche was deliuered from the begynninge, that we shoulde loue eche one other with a mutual and a true Christian loue. But this beneuolence, the consent and all one facion of godly life amonge oure selues must procure: that we may lyue in all one purposed studies after the

commaundement of God, which enioined vs nothing so diligētly, as mutuall loue amonge oure selues. There is no true loue amonge the wiked, nor among them that be of vnlike facions. Therfore I geue no new commaundement, but I geue you warninge diligently, to continue still in that, which

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you haue already receaued longe a goe, and not to suffre youre selues by any subtilties of the false prophetes to be plucked awaye. For in dede there are manye deceauers in the worlde, whiche denye that Iesus is Christe, whiche shoulde come into the worlde accordinge to the prophetes prophecienges. He that teacheth thus, is a deceauer, and Antichriste him self, Chrilstes aduersarie. Let euery one take hede to hym selfe, leste if he forsake that whiche he hathe well begonne, he lose all the frute of those thinges, whiche he hathe hitherto done well: but let vs geue diligence, that we may receaue the full hyre, which happeneth not, but to them that perseuer still vnto the ende. Whosoeuer swarueth from the trueth, and abydeth not still in the doctrine of Christe, he is estraunged also from God the father, in that he swarued from the sonne. But he that constauntly foloweth his doctrine, is in his so doinge, dearely beloued both vnto the father and to the sonne. The one canne neyther be had nor forsaken, without the other. Thys is the true doctrine, whiche you haue receaued of true recorde bearours from the begynnyng. But if any man come vnto you, and bringeth a contrary doctrine to this, to carye you away from the Gospelles veritie, you ought not onely to take no hede vnto him, but also he ought not so muche as be admitted in to your house if he desyre lodging: nor to be bidden, *God spede*, if he chaūce to mete you in the way. For it is daunger lest he infecte the household with his familiaritie: and for hys lodging, requite an euill turne: and lest of bidding him *God spede*, there arise comunicacion. And in dede euill communicaciō corrupteth good maners. To be shorte, he that saluteth and kepeth company with such a maner deceauour, he semeth to be a companion of his euill dooinges. For he geueth a courage vnto the wicked, whan he seeth him selfe any whit regarded with them, whome he goeth about to subuerte: and geueth an outwarde shewe of euill vnto other, as though he semed to fauour the naughtynes of hym, whose familiaritie he doeth not abhorre. There were many other thinges, whiche I was desyrous to wryte vnto you concerning these matters, howbeit I had rather open them to you presentlye, than to put them in wryting: For I truste shortly to come see you and talke with you presently mouth to mouthe, that the Ioy, whiche I haue conceaued of youre constaunt synceritie, maye bee more pleynteous and full, whan I shall bothe presentlye see in you, that which now beinge absent I heare of you: and you againe shall see with your eyes the loue that I beare towardses you. Thy nephewes, thy sisters sonnes, whiche is a christian woman commend them vnto the.

Thende of the seconde epistle of Iohn.